Particle in cell simulations on GPU clusters

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Simulations for laser plasma acceleration

- Particle in cell (PIC) simulations are useful tools for designing and optimizing laser-driven, plasma-based accelerators.
- Such simulations may require a huge amount of computation ($\gtrsim 10^5$ CPU hours).

Motivation: why a GPU PIC code?

2012

Run simulations we need to run today on the most efficient parallel architectures available (GPUs) for PICs

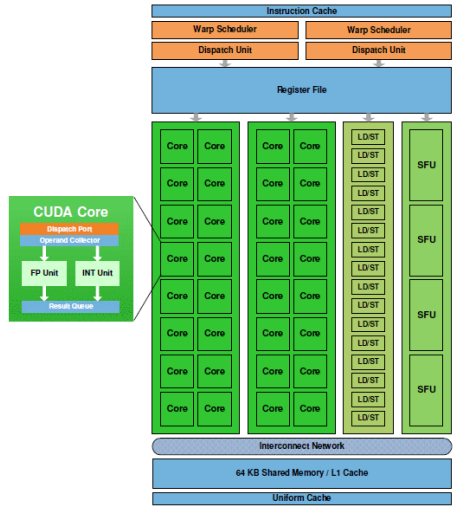
- Performance exploiting exposed parallelism
- Efficiency from data locality

2016

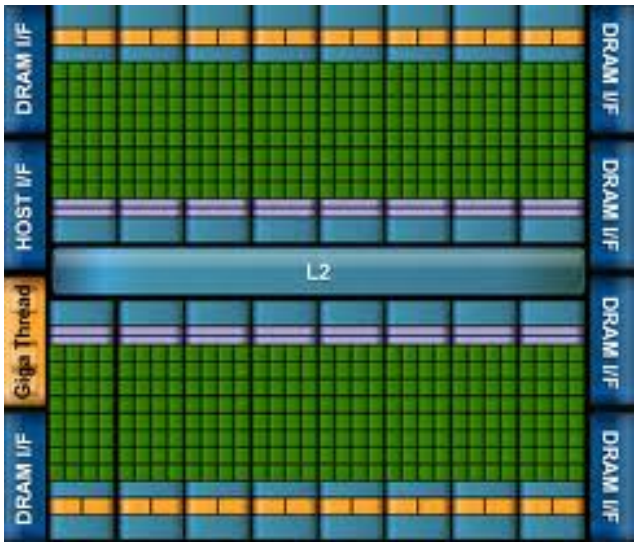
- Path to exascale computing era → dominated by manycore architectures
  - Prepare PIC algorithms for massively-manycore shared-memory node systems
  - Bigger subdomains → fundamental for scalability/load balancing
- GPUs roadmap promises 200% performance increase every year and a half (next generation out this fall)
  - Help to sustain the computational demand in LPA community

The NVIDIA CUDA GPU architecture

- On chip: ~15 Multiprocessors, each one:
  - 256 KB register files
  - 16-48 Kb manual cache: shared memory
  - Issuing instructions
    - executing “warps” of 32 threads in a SIMD fashion
    - divergent branches in a warp cause warp serialization
  - Hides latency keeping many thread warps in flight
- High-bandwidth memory bus (~200 Gb/s) connecting to device RAM
  - Prefers ordered access within a warp
  - Cannot rely on cache: number of cache bytes-per-thread is several orders of magnitude lower than on CPUs



Fermi Streaming Multiprocessor (SM)



The latency / throughput dilemma

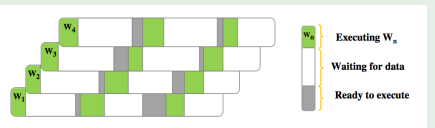
- Memory Latency and Bandwidth are often limiting performance. Two different strategies:

Single thread optimization

- In scalar processors
- Reduce latencies
- Use large caches (per thread)
- Predict branches

Throughput processors: GPUs

1. Provide high bandwidth/througputs
2. *Saturate it: Tolerate* latencies processing many threads in *parallel*
3. Space/energy saved removing scalar optimization used for having more computational power



Similar considerations also apply for other instructions, not only memory accesses.

Jasmine

- "*Jasmine*", a 3D GPU particle in cell code (PIC), featuring:
  - Second order explicit PIC algorithm (FDTD + Boris Pusher) in double precision
  - High order particles shape functions
  - Charge conserving simulations using Esirkepov shape factors
  - 3D multi-GPU simulations with high scalability
  - Dynamic load balancing
  - Moving window
  - Particle trajectory tracking
  - Simulation restart & asynchronous I/O
  - Integrated with a radiation generation computation code

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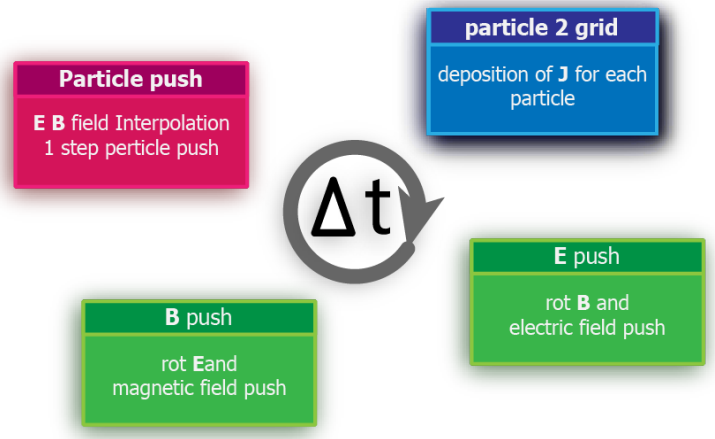
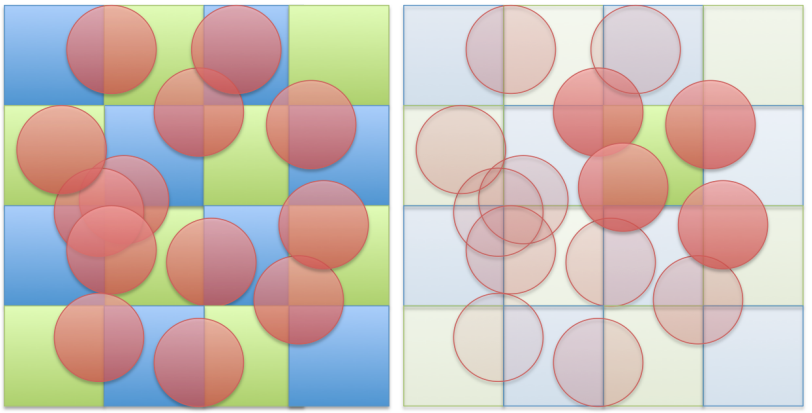
Particle in cell method, algorithmically



- EM PIC: Maxwell+Lorentz+(Vlasov sampling)
- Particle-grid interactions:
  - Force on particles is interpoladed (averaging) *from fields grids*
  - Particle current/density is deposited *to grid*
    - scatter operation: a particle adds its density value the cells that it overlaps

PIC Deposition algorithm on massively parallel architectures

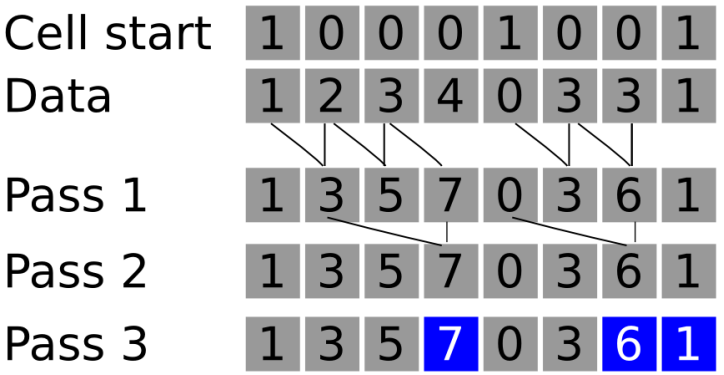


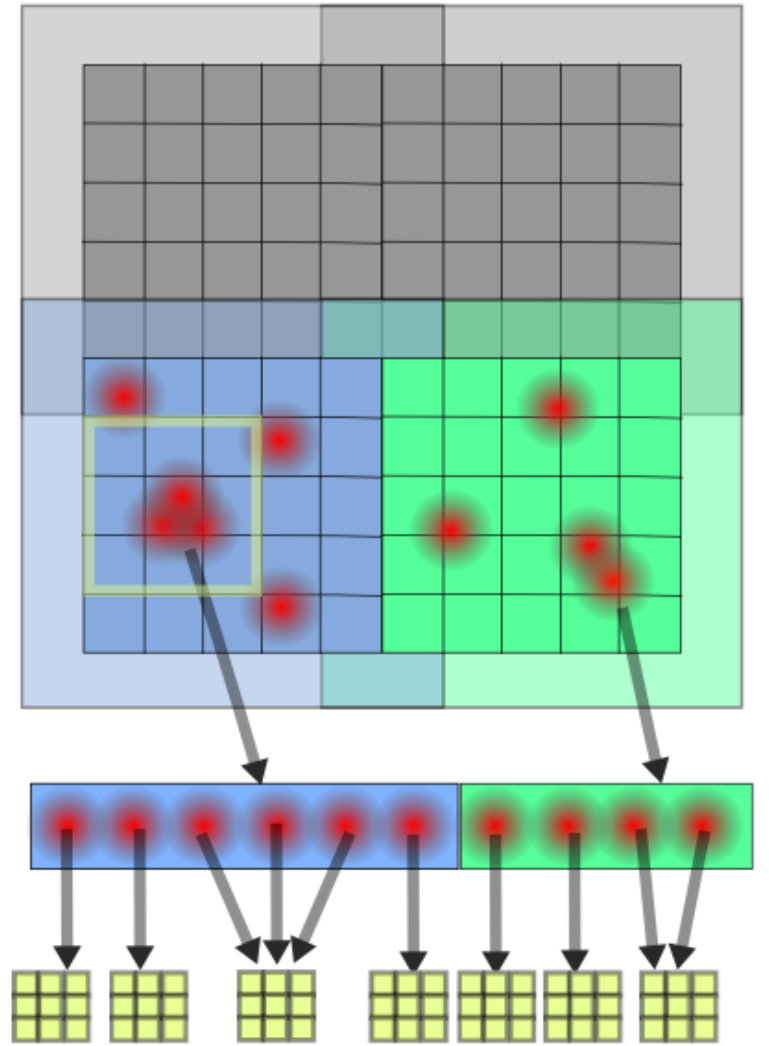
1. Naive, (1 particle $\longleftrightarrow$ 1 thread) parallelization $\rightarrow$ Race conditions on same memory cells: wrong results
   - Atomic operations or other synchronization methods are required
2. N particles per cell, particle shape function of total order K (4~27)
   - Density grid data is accessed $K \cdot N_{ppc}$ times
   - It's *worth caching* in GPU multiprocessor's shared memory

Deposition algorithm without atomics

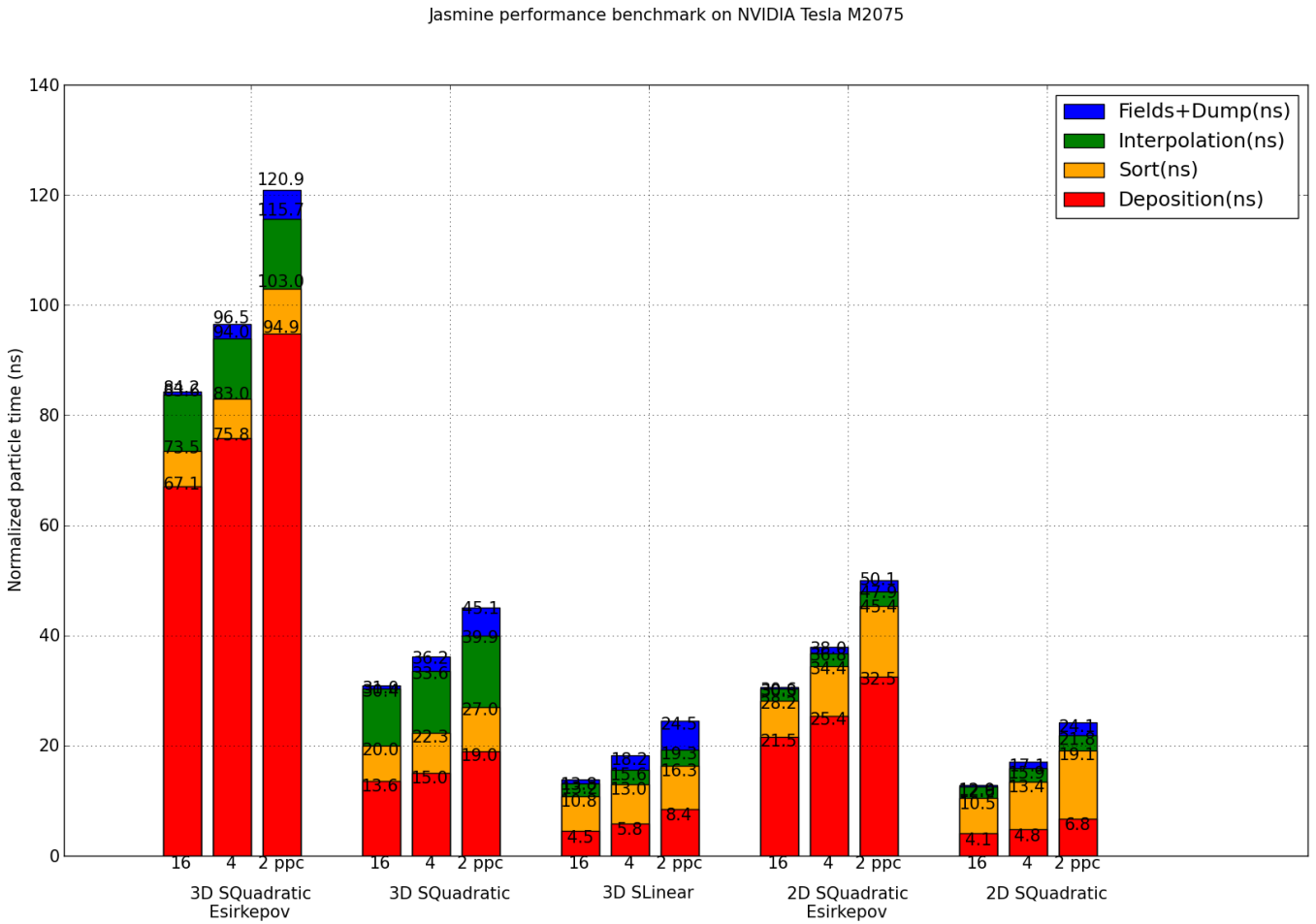
Algorithm

- Sort by cell block and cell
- Assign a CUDA block to a cell block
- Perform a per-block, shared memory, *segmented scan* to compute density sum for each cell
- Sum cached copy to global grid





Performance



LASER: a=7.7, waist=9.0 mum, fwhm=24.0 fs PLASMA: density=1.00e+19 1/cm^3. Simulation run for $ct = 60\mu m$, double precision. Note: 3D test with Esirkepov method runs stretched grid

Performance gain

- *Jasmine* vs *ALaDyn* (our CPU code), same exact simulation.
- Performance of a *single* NVIDIA Fermi GPU equates ~200x BlueGene cores or ~45x IBM SP6 cores.
  - Plus, since subdomains are much larger, load balancing and scalability are much easier
- In the simulation setups shown above (fair resolution), *jasmine* can simulate *~4mm of plasma* per day on a ~24 GPUs cluster

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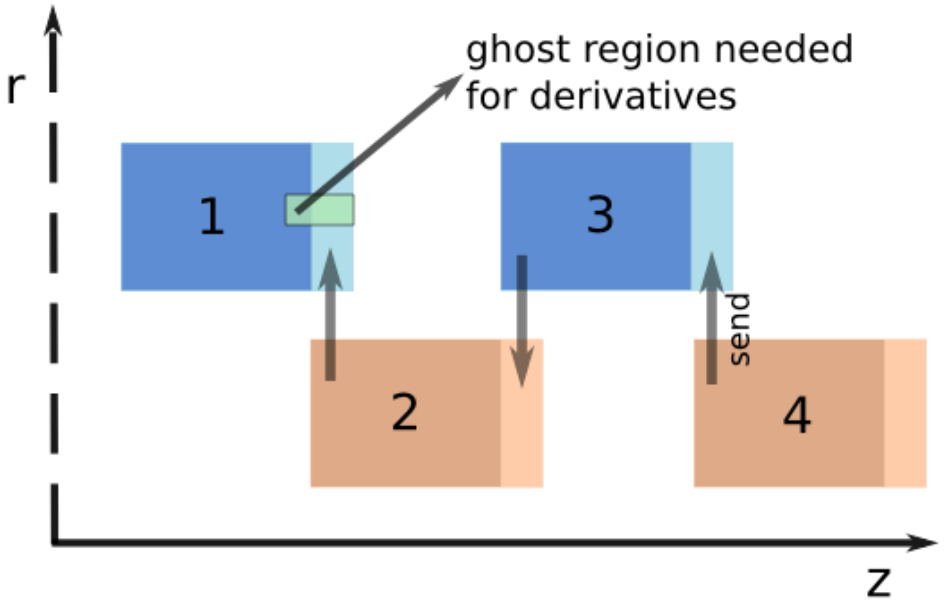
Scaling to multiple GPUs: Hiding network transfer

- Exchange:
  1. Fields' halos
  2. Particles leaving subdomain
- Cluster nodes communicate using standard MPI

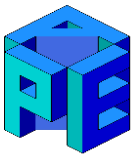


Scaling to multiple GPUs: Hiding network transfer

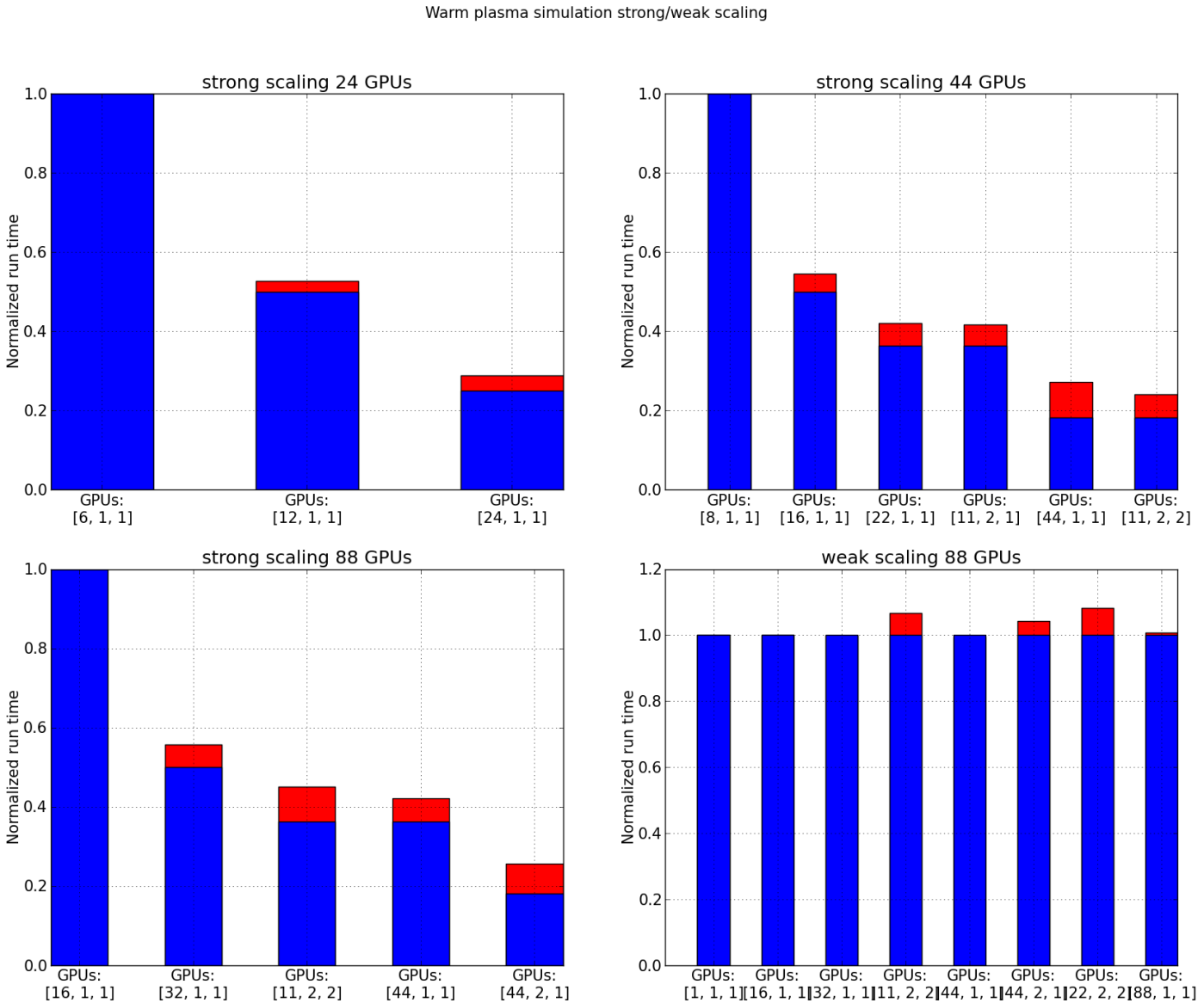
- Exchange:
  1. Fields' halos
  2. Particles leaving subdomain
- Cluster nodes communicate using standard MPI

- Transfer particles concurrently with current deposition.
  - Communication can be hidden almost completely.

- Scalability test: warm plasma simulation on INFN APE cluster @ "ULa Sapienza" and PLX machine @ CINECA



Scaling


Warm plasma simulation strong/weak scaling
strong scaling 24 GPUs
Normalized run time
GPUs: [6, 1, 1]
GPUs: [12, 1, 1]
GPUs: [24, 1, 1]
strong scaling 44 GPUs
GPUs: [8, 1, 1]
GPUs: [16, 1, 1]
GPUs: [22, 1, 1]
GPUs: [11, 2, 1]
GPUs: [44, 1, 1]
GPUs: [11, 2, 2]
strong scaling 88 GPUs
GPUs: [16, 1, 1]
GPUs: [32, 1, 1]
GPUs: [11, 2, 2]
GPUs: [44, 1, 1]
GPUs: [44, 2, 1]
weak scaling 88 GPUs
GPUs: [1, 1, 1]
GPUs: [16, 1, 1]
GPUs: [32, 1, 1]
GPUs: [11, 2, 2]
GPUs: [44, 1, 1]
GPUs: [44, 2, 1]
GPUs: [22, 2, 2]
GPUs: [88, 1, 1]

Simple algorithm for load balancing

- The particle motion easily leads to inhomogeneous distribution of the load
- Shrink the volume of heavy-loaded nodes:
  - Each few timesteps select a subdomain (and its row) and the direction where to shrink
  - Subdomains topology remains intact (vertices conservation)
  - Choice is done trying to minimize the cost function:

$$k_1 \times Max(Load)/Average(Load) + k_2 \times Variance(Load)/Average(Load)$$

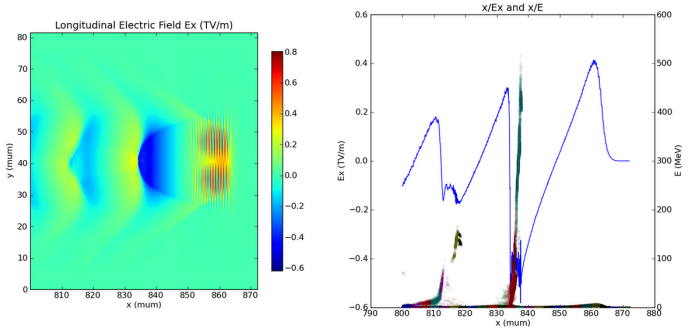
Load balancer test case

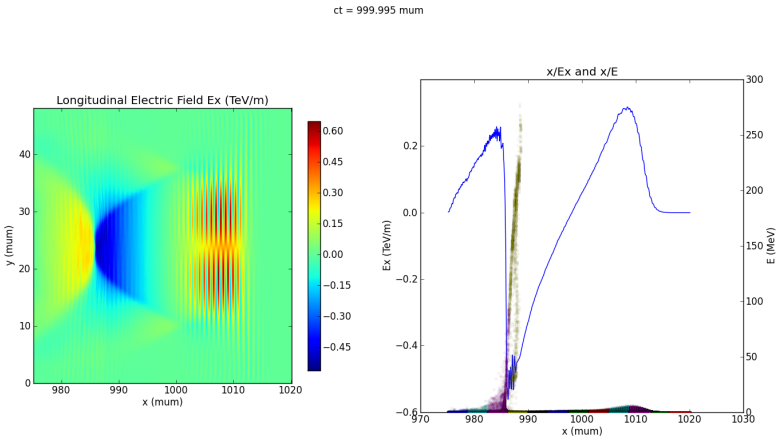
Setup (coarse test)

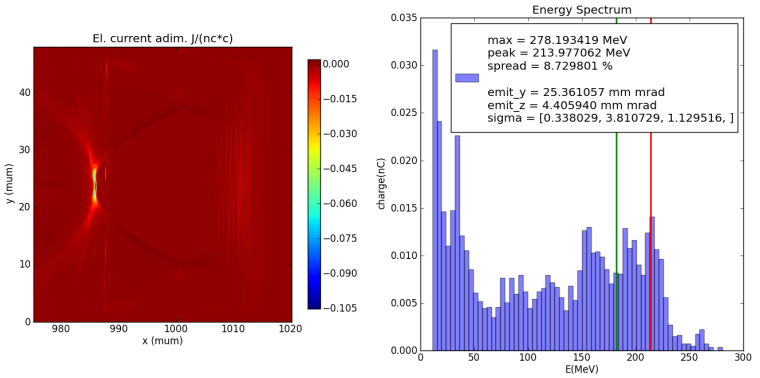
LASER: a=5.8, waist=13.2 mum, fwhm=24.0 fs

PLASMA: density=3.80e+18 1/cm^3

GRID: n=[729, 96, 96], dx=['6.25e-02', '5.00e-01', '5.00e-01'] mum

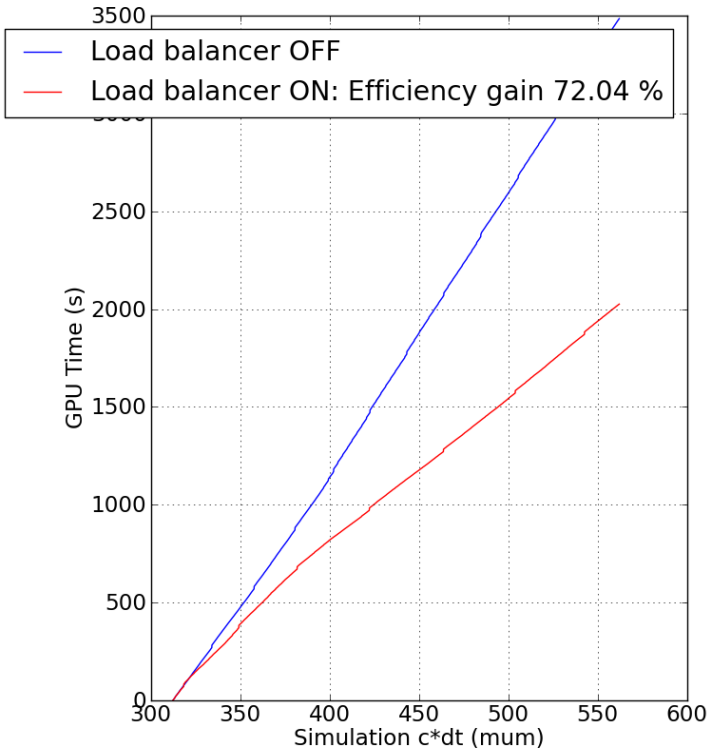


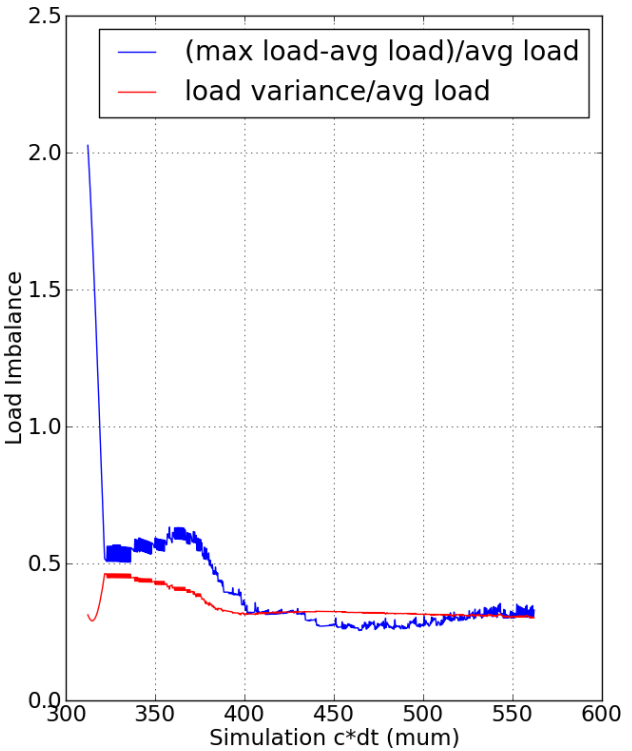




Test case: scaling with load balancing

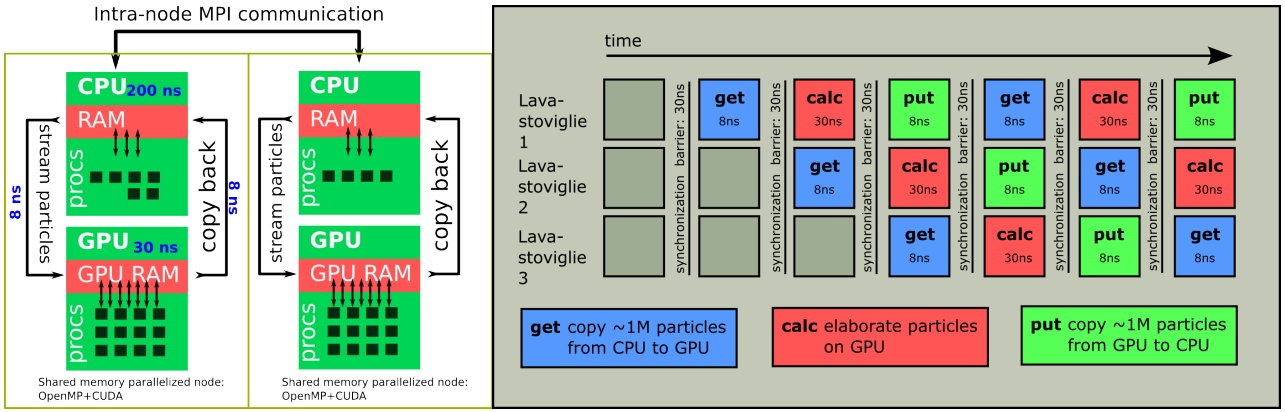
- With 72 subdomains:





Memory intensive simulations

- Total memory availability represents a constraint for many simulations (for example ion acceleration ones).
  - In a node, GPU memory is often much less than the total host memory available
  - Using host memory to store simulation data make larger simulations possible on a cluster of fixed size
- Asynchronous stream of particle chunks stored in main CPU memory overlapped with computation using CUDA streams
  - Slower but no longer memory bound to the GPU device memory
  - Currently in testing stage



Implementation note: Meta-programming

- Meta-programming can be used:
  - for writing maintainable code for all particle weighting / numerical schemes
  - tweak parameters for optimization of each case
  - implementing different numerical schemes using the same core algorithms (deposition and intepolation)
- Attempts:
  1. C++ template meta-programming
  2. Python-based code template engine (code becomes more linear, but non standard)
- Python also used for simulation initial conditions definition, plotting (numpy+matplotlib) and basic automated data-analysis

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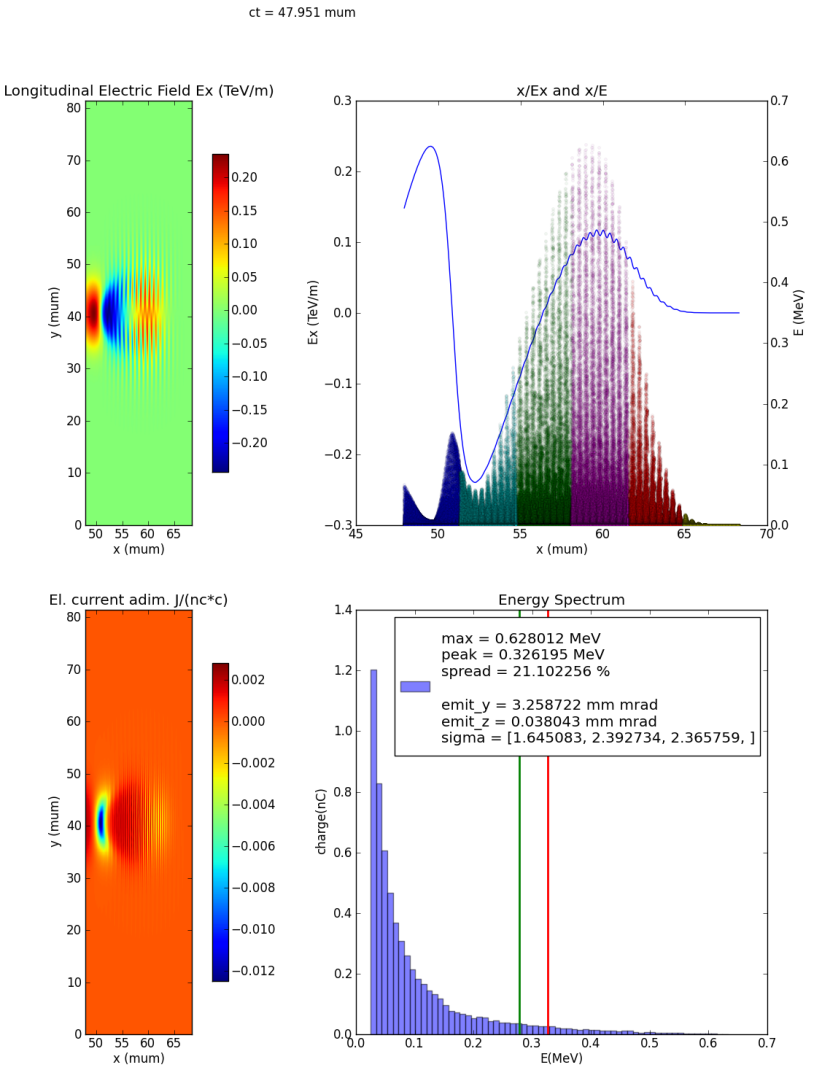
LWFA benchmark simulation

Setup

LASER: a=2.0, waist=8.2 mum, fwhm=21.0 fs

PLASMA: density=1.38e+19 1/cm^3

GRID: n=[512, 256, 256], dx=['4.00e-02', '3.18e-01', '3.18e-01'] mum



LWFA benchmark simulation

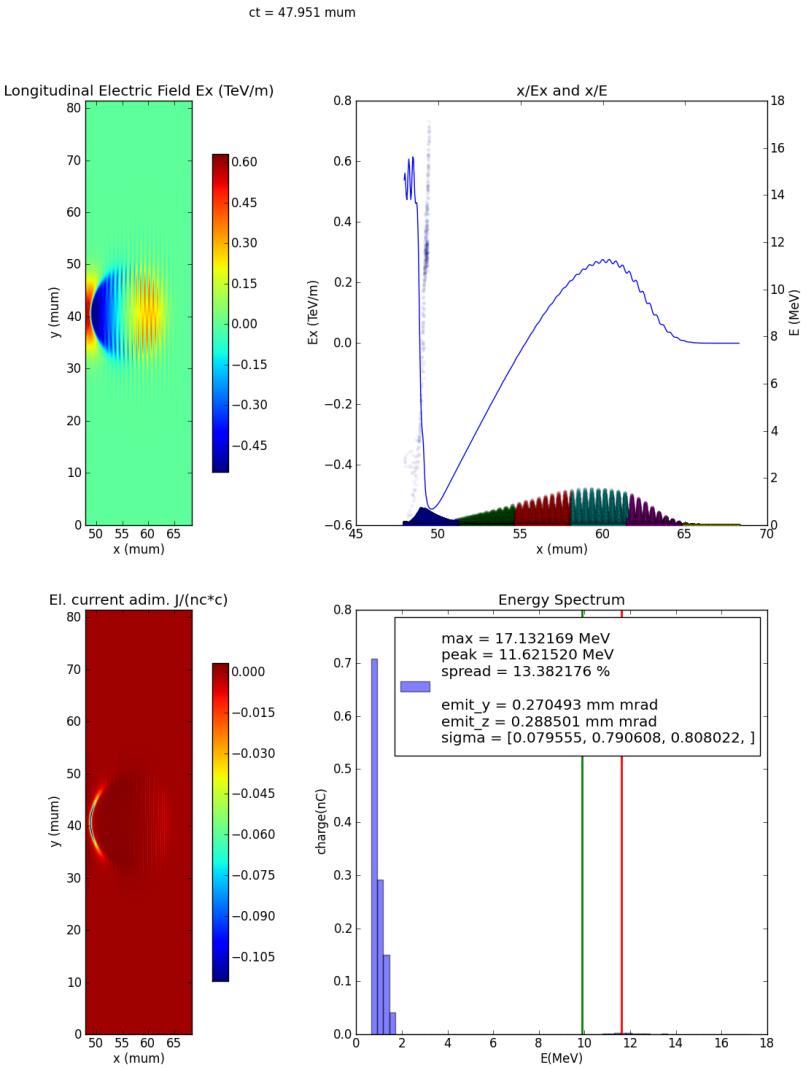
Setup

Parameters from Paul et al. *Benchmarking the codes VORPAL, OSIRIS, and QuickPIC with Laser Wakefield Acceleration Simulations,* AIP Conference Proceedings;1/22/2008

LASER: a=4.0, waist=8.2 mum, fwhm=21.0 fs

PLASMA: density=1.38e+19 1/cm^3

GRID: n=[512, 256, 256], dx=['4.00e-02', '3.18e-01', '3.18e-01'] mum



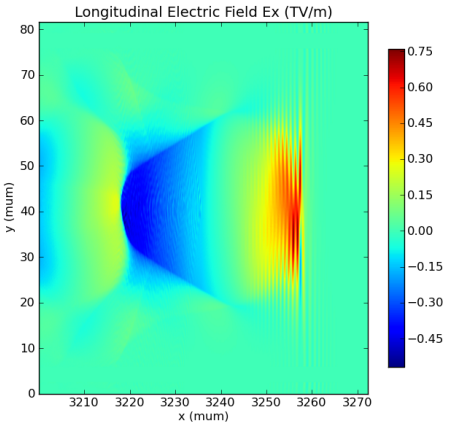
SPARCLab electron acceleration simulation

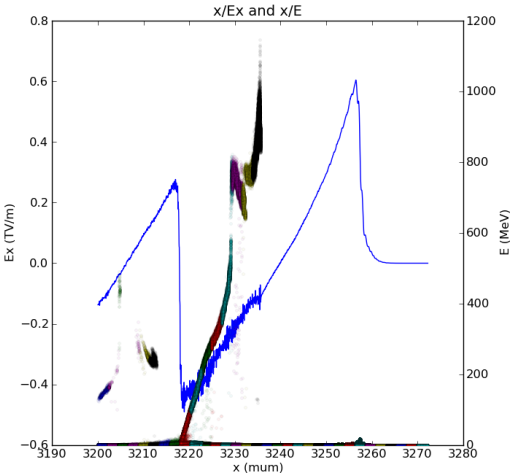
Setup

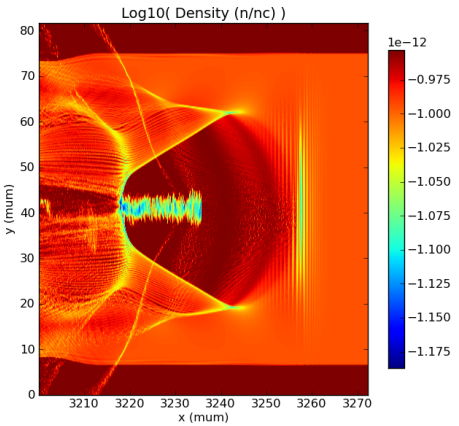
LASER: a=4.9, waist=15.5 mum,

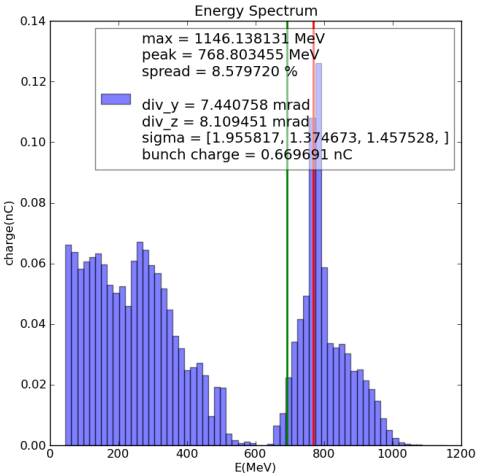
fwhm=30.0 fs

PLASMA: density=3.0e+18 1/cm^3









SPARCLab electron acceleration simulation

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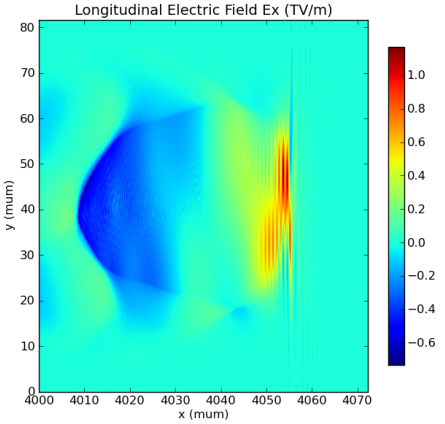
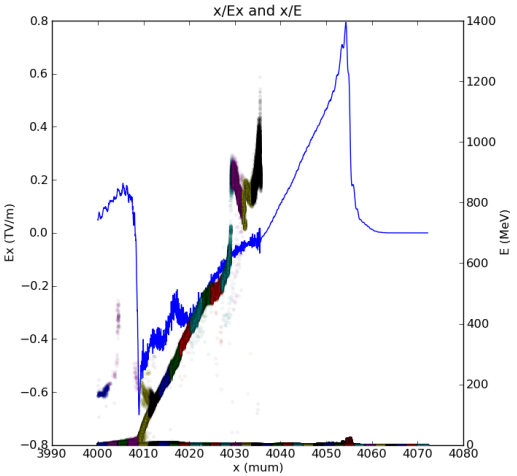
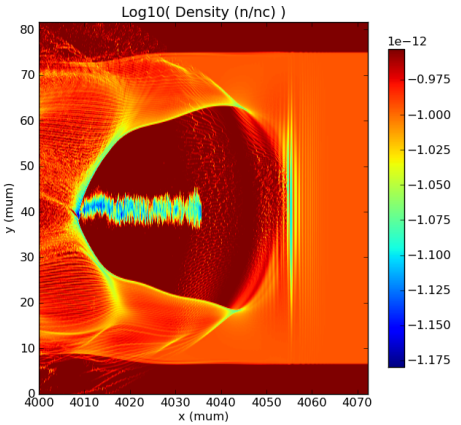
LASER: a=4.9, waist=15.5 mum,

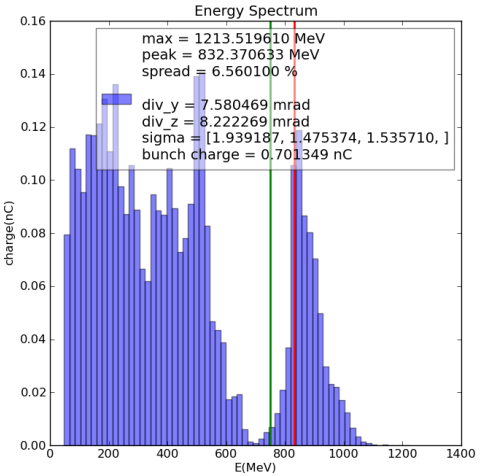
fwhm=30.0 fs

PLASMA: density=3.0e+18 1/cm^3









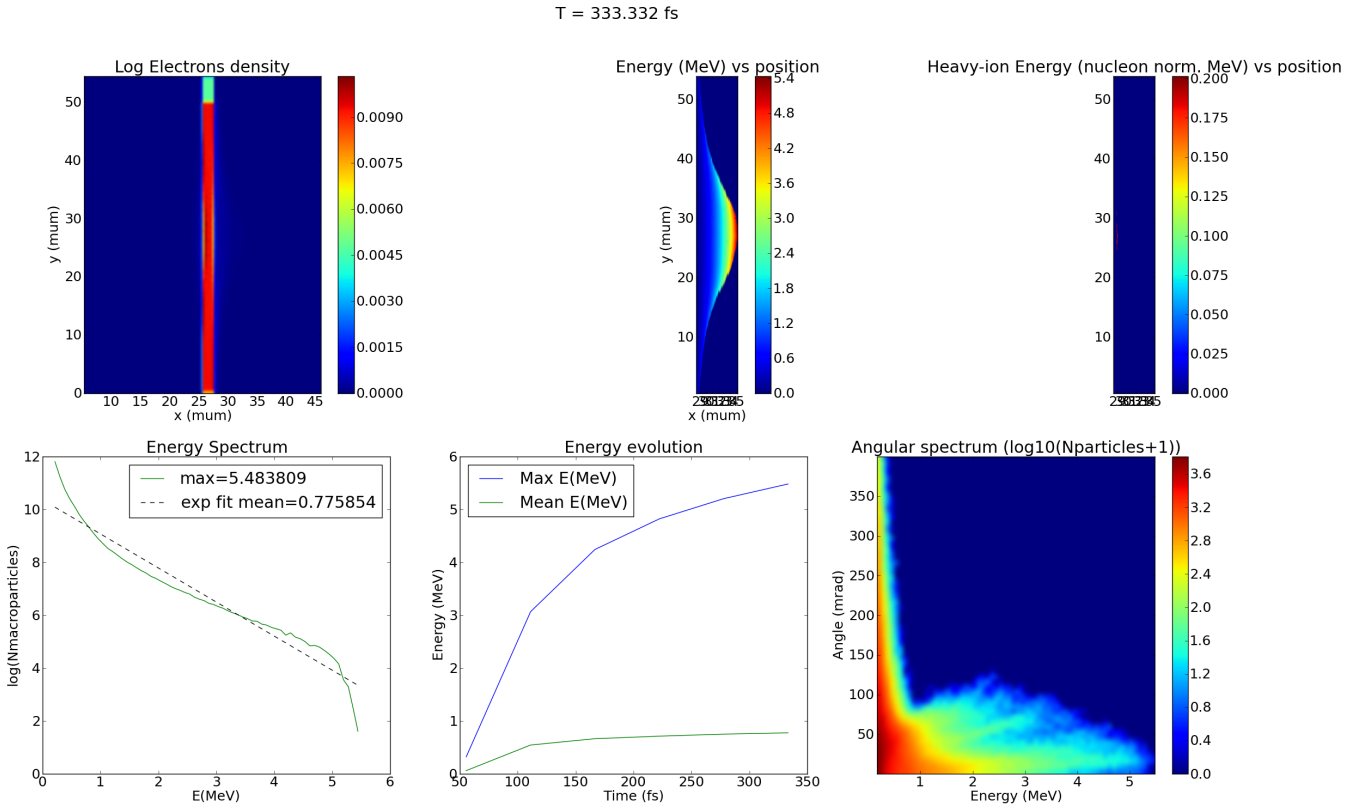
TNSA ion acceleration: Frascati Flame parameters

Setup

LASER: a=7, waist=10.0 mum, fwhm=30.0 fs

TARGET: 2.0μm thick

Double layer: aluminium, (n/nc = 100) + back side contaminants layer



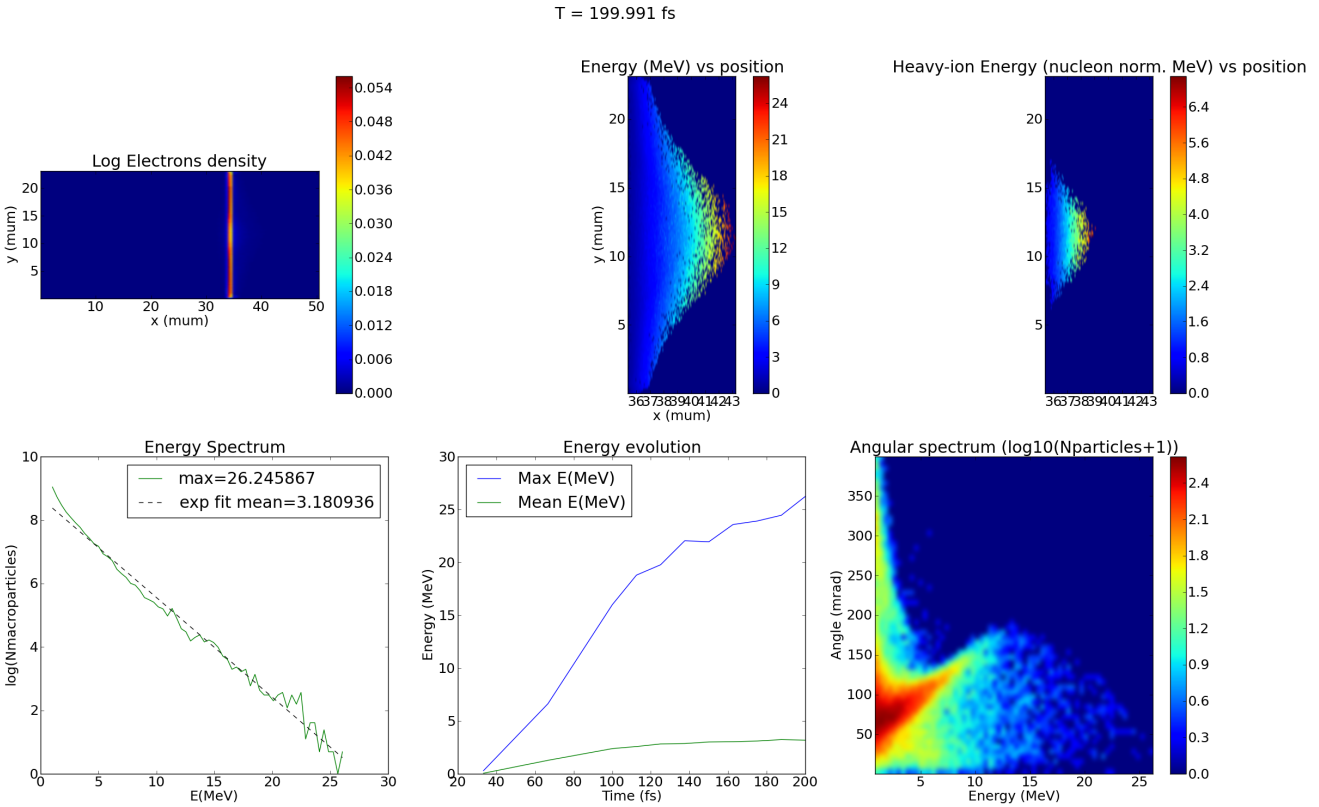
TNSA ion acceleration: Nara-like parameters

Setup

LASER: a=22, waist=3.5 mum, fwhm=40.0 fs

TARGET: 0.8μm thick

Double layer: aluminium (n/nc = 60) + back side contaminants layer



Future work

- Performance tuning for Kepler architecture
- Implement more accurate and/or optimized numerical schemes.
  - GPUs alone are not of enough for satisfying all the computational requirements of the experimental groups (e.g. simulating a 10GeV electron acceleration stage).
- Lot of work to do!

References

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